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Told Among the Hills





Wm. Silberstein

Fold Among the Hills

BY

WM. WILBERFORCE NEWTON

EASTER EDITION

PITTSFIELD MASS

J. A. MAXIM

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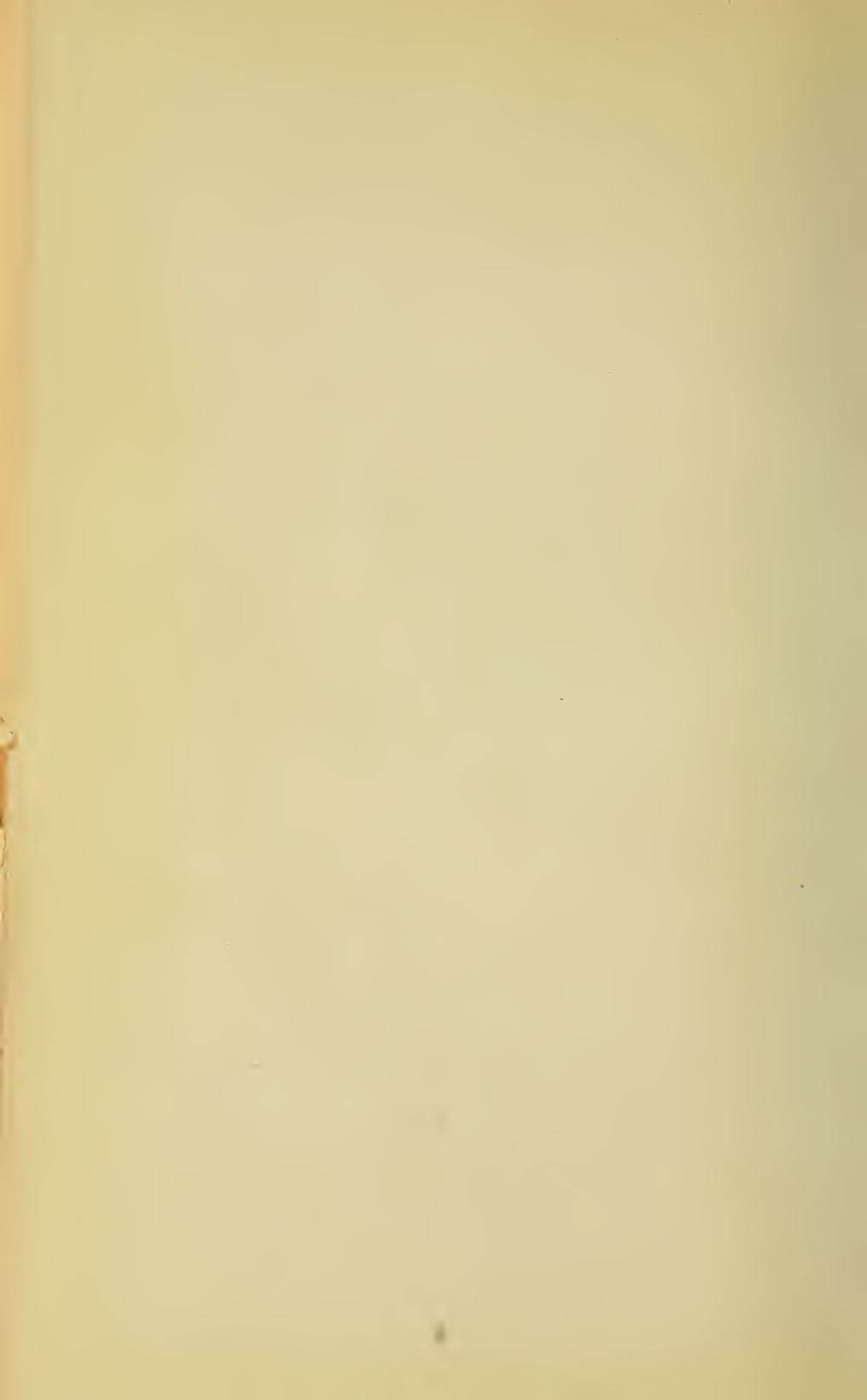
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HELP FROM THE HILLS.

“I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP!”

Up to the Hills of God's eternal keeping,
Which round us rise with ever wooded domes,
Our spirits struggle : from our mountain homes
We gather in the vintage and the reaping
Of inward quiet in the troubled soul,
Of peace and rest, and freedom from the toil
Of feverish warfare mid the endless roll
Of crowded cities built on barren soil.
Here midst these hoary hills a calm descends
On simple living. Each new opening scene
Brings work and rest, while nature gently blends
The winter's storm with summer skies serene,
And all the consecrated household joys
We gather in as children do their toys.

From Greylock's summit to the burnished sheen
Which gilds Onota's placid bosom fair,

HELP FROM THE HILLS.

How many a path, like an enchanted stair,
Leads to the heart of Nature : like a queen
Hidden in trackless maze her spirit dwells
And throbs through leafy grove and silent glen.
A conscious joy and sense of presence wells
Eternally amid these shades, and when
The tired truant seeks the mother's arms,
Worn with the grimy dust of stubborn strife,
At every turn in wood and dell, the charms
Of thy restoring self, Thou Font of Life,
The wayward nature feeleth, and it thrills
The yielding soul with strength from out these Hills.

At times the parable is manifest ; with open page
We read the lesson found within our reach.
It is not difficult to learn or teach ;
And while men wonder, while the heathen rage,
We see the pictured truth lie close at hand ;
Help cometh from the Hills. This much is clear ;
This much at least 'tis ours to understand ;
And he who wills to win must never fear
Above himself to live ; his eager heart
Must heed those primal voices manifold

1



HELP FROM THE HILLS.

Which upward call him ; if the better part
Of life he chooses, let his spirit bold
Dare to chain down the self-asserting brute
Which hides in man and makes his music mute.

O life ! O time ! O struggling soul of man,
Life, time, are in thy hands ; dare to be brave,
Dare to be godlike, and divinely crave
That which is God's in God's own chosen plan,
Whereby, among the saved in Zion, thou,
With willing feet and soul forever free
From stain or sin, among the saints may bow
In grateful praise to Him who fashioned thee
In His own likeness. Neither stock nor stone,
Nor force nor power in nature, can outlast
The spark of God within thee. Round yon throne
His children stand ; and when the archangel's blast
Shall rend the face of nature with decay,
Thou shalt live on in ever opening day.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

SCENE:—St. John at Ephesus, on the last Easter-day of his life, gathers the members of the church together, by the riverside, and tells his converts once more the story of the first Easter-day.

“Little children . . . it is the last time.”

1 JOHN ii. 18.

PREFACE.

“In the convent of Drontheim,
Alone in her chamber
Knelt Astrid the Abbess,
At midnight, adoring,
Beseeching, entreating
The Virgin and Mother.

“She heard in the silence
The voice of one speaking
Without in the darkness,
In gusts of the night-wind,
Now louder, now nearer,
Now lost in the distance.

“The voice of a stranger
It seemed as she listened,
Of some one who answered,
Beseeching, imploring,
A cry from afar off
She could not distinguish.

PREFACE.

“The voice of Saint John,
The beloved disciple,
Who wandered and waited
The Master’s appearance,
Alone in the darkness,
Unsheltered and friendless.”

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

I.

Gather round me, little children, for my days are ebbing
fast,
And your aged friend and father goeth to his home at
last.

Soon the oldest of Apostles, white-haired, worn, and
craving rest,
Called by God, must join his brethren, saints and martyrs,
saved and blest.

Here, beside the swift Meander, where our holy church
has stood,
Saints of Ephesus, I bid you hold the faith and seek the
good.

On this happy Easter morning, you have sung your hymns
of praise,
And my soul is filled with memories of those far-off,
wondrous days,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

When we hurried in the morning, hope befogged with
clouds of gloom ;
Hoping much, but fearing most—the silence of the sullen
tomb.

Little children ! sure, I feel it—'tis the last time my poor
breath
Shall relate the Easter story—how our Lord has conquered
death.
Gather round me, then, and listen while I live the past
once more,
And recount the golden hours of that Easter-day of
yore.

II.

Gray and cold was the dawn, and darkness hung long on
the twilight,
When Mary, the loved one forgiven, from whom had
departed the devils,
Limping and halt as she was, for the demons had troubled
her sorely,
Tapped at the lattice-door of the house of my mother,
where Mary,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

The sister of Mary, the Virgin and wife of Clopas were
waiting.

These were the three who had stood by the blood-dripping
cross of the Saviour.

Theirs were the hands that received the body of Jesus,
when Joseph

Ascending the terrible cross, with Nicodemus, the ruler,
Gently lowered the sheet, and folded the arms of the
victim.

Bearing the agonized mother away from the sight of the
crosses,

Giving my arm to the sufferer, pierced with the sword of
her sorrows,

Surely fulfilling the word which Simeon spake in the
temple,

Back from this vision of death, away from the shouts of
the soldiers,

Wearied and stricken and worn, I was sleeping the sleep
of the troubled,

Guarding the home of our loved one, of Mary, the mother
of Jesus,

Hard by the narrow street, that led up to the fortress of
Herod.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Little knew I of the plan of my mother, that early by
day-break
The women should go the tomb, to wait for the promised
deliverance.
'Twas Salome, my mother, you know, Zebedee's wife, of
Gennesaret,
Who came to the Master of old, and asked for a place in
in the kingdom,
For those who stood nearest her heart, as she gave up her
all to the Master,
Leaving her home in the north, and her husband, the
fisherman sailor ;
'Twas Salome, my mother, I say, who prepared for this
early adventure,
First at the tomb in the garden, last upon Calvary's hill-top.
Busy were they in the work of preparing the spikenard
and ointment,
Hoping and fearing by turns and ready for joy or for
sorrow.
Thus in the dark of the morning, before the first red of the
sunrise,
Wrapping their mantles about them, their hurrying feet
sought the Garden.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

III.

But hark ! Was it thunder they heard
Rumbling in darkness so still ?
Stars in the sky seemed to fall,
Soldiers affrighted, dismayed,
Fled from the tomb, and like sheep
Struck by the fiery bolts
Of an eastern simoon in the sands
Of the desert, were fleeing away,
Trembling, the sisters advanced,
Where a luminous cloud seemed to rest
In the rocky recess of the tomb.
Then came the vision of light !
Angels were guarding the place !
The stone on the pathway was rolled,
The sepulchre empty and bright,
Gave the first note of that joy
Which to Easter must always belong,
Telling them Christ was alive !
Then in the triumph of bliss,
Quick in her womanly thought,
Mary, the Magdalene, fled,
Leaving her comrades behind,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

To feast on the fulness of faith
Changed to the richness of sight,
While the red sun in the heavens
Poured forth the splendors of day !
Never had sunrise till then
Meant such a flood of bright hopes ;
Never had light till this morn
Been such a message from God :
Never had darkness and fear
Lurking within the cold tomb
Been driven away, until now.

It was then I heard hurrying feet,
And the latch of the door opened wide,
At the home of the mother of Christ,
Where Simon had come from his tears,
Humbled and saddened and wan.
'Twas the Magdalene. Ere she could speak,
In her face that was lighted with joy,
The message of triumph I read,
As she clasped her pale hands and exclaimed :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

IV.

The Master has surely arisen !

Come, visit the spot where He lay.

The keepers have fled, and an angel has said,

“Christ is risen, is risen to-day.”

We have been to the tomb very early,

With ointment and spikenard, for fear

Our hopes should deceive us, but, brothers, believe us,

The angels have dried every tear.

It was dark when we came to the garden,

And we felt for the latch, as the gray

Seemed to lighten, our footsteps to brighten

And herald this wonderful day.

Yet, perchance it is only a vision,

Perchance I am dreaming or mad,

But they've taken away our dear Lord where He lay,

Run quickly ! Behold, and be glad !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

V.

Starting away like ships that feel the breeze on the canvas,
Simon and I in the zeal which is born in the moment of
triumph ;

Ran through the city's street, till we came to the gate of
the Garden :

First at the tomb was I, while Peter came panting behind
me,

Weary and worn as he was, from the tears of his bitter
sorrow.

Alone we stood at the grave which was silent and robbed
of its inmate ;

No vision to us was vouchsafed, and the women had gone
to the city.

The guard from the fortress had fled, to carry the story to
Pilate.

“Where were the angels,” we asked, “and how should
we know what the truth was ?”

For the sun was climbing the heavens and mystery still
was our portion.

'Twas then in our utter amaze, that the Magdalene
following behind us,

Came to the open tomb, and taking her resolute station,
Said she would watch o'er the grave till she saw a new
vision of angels :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Firm in her faith was she, that Jesus was surely arisen,
And trusting her future to God, she uttered this song, in
her rapture :

VI.

I shall behold His face
And triumph in His love,
I yet shall see His love for me,
God's loving care above.

I may not see His ways,
Or know His secret plan,
Yet I can wait His kingly state
And feel His love for man.

I can not scan God's will,
I linger here in faith.
Yet I shall see His love to me,
I'll trust Him unto death.

I shall behold His face,
His loving form shall see.
It must be nigh ; I can but sigh,
Bring me, My Lord, to Thee !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

VII.

It was then when we had departed, and wended our way to
the city,
Seeking the other apostles, to tell them these wonderful
rumors,
That Mary, alone in the Garden, beholding a form drawing
near her,
Said to the vineyard's watch (supposing the gardener was
coming),
“If thou has borne Him hence, oh, tell me where thou
hast laid Him,
And I will take Him away, if death is the end of my
vision.
But if He is risen indeed—” Then beholding the face of
the stranger,
To the earth, as one dead, she fell; while Jesus said to
her—“MARY!”

VIII.

“Rabboni, my Master,” she cried,
“Thy feet, O my God, let me clasp!
Am I treading the pavement above
Where freedom is given from doubt?”

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Am I lifted to light that is bliss ?
Has heaven come down upon earth
Since Christ over death has the power ?”
Then Jesus to Mary replied ;
Her face in her mantle shut in,
As though she were blinded with light :
“ Touch me not yet, O my child,
Not yet to my Father in heaven
Bearing the sheaves from the field,
Bringing the first-fruits of life,
Have I in triumph gone up.
But go to my brethren and say,
Back to our Father and God
Soon I ascend ; that in joy
In the kingdom that lieth beyond,
We for all ages may be
Brethren, united in life,
Never by sorrow undone !”

IX.

Gone in a moment was Christ, and the whispering breath
of the west wind
Fanned the penitent's face as she knelt where her Lord had
been standing :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Leaving the Garden again, she encountered Salome and
Mary
Just by the brook, in the way that leads up to the fish-
pond of Herod :
Warm was their loving embrace while the Magdalene sang
in her gladness :

X.

Hail to the brightness which heralds His glory !
Hail to the coming of Christ among men !
Back from the tomb He has come, and the story
Is told us by angels again and again !

Death is uncrowned, since the Saviour of mortals
The grave and destruction has robbed of their gloom :
Victory shines out from heaven's opened portals,
Jesus has conquered the power of the tomb.

Christ is arisen ! O tell it, with gladness,
Bright shines this Easter morn, bringing Him near,
Lovingly owning Him, banishing sadness,
Hope springs eternal o'er darkness and fear.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

XI.

It was then in the court of the temple, the priests and the
rulers were plotting,

How they might silence the tale brought back by the
terrified soldiers :

“They have stolen His body away; say this to the
wondering people.”

Such was the word of the rulers, such was their meaning
of Easter.

Easter noon was it now, when a party of loving disciples,
Women, who spices prepared, to lay at the tomb of the
prophet,

From Galilee came, and inquired the way to the garden of
Joseph.

Thus they drew near to the cavern, all fern-crowned and
buried in mosses,

Peering within at the place where they thought they
should see the Lord's body.

While they were earnestly gazing, amazed to find nothing
but grave-clothes,

A luminous flame seemed to shine, and lo, the bright forms
of two angels

Told them that Christ was alive, as they chanted this song
in sweet music :

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

XII.

Awake! Awake! Glad voices make!
Sing praise to Christ the Lord,
The living Word,
In earth and heaven
Eternally adored!
For thankful songs
From hearts and tongues
To Christ our King is given
From hearts of men
Set free again
And happy saints in heaven.

'Tis Easter morn, new faith is born,
The day of days the best.
Sing praise to God!
Sing out abroad,
With joy and hope possessed!
For now the Prince
Of Peace hath fought,
And triumphed o'er the grave,
With holy arm,
And strong right hand,
Omnipotent to save.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

No shadows now, our spirits bow,
Our souls are raised on high,
The Son of man
In God's own plan
Has come to earth to die.
No doubts or fear
Could hold Him here
Detained by mortal breath.
For now He lives
And freely gives
Redemption over death !

XIII.

Frightened, and awe-struck, and still, the women from
Galilee pondered
What this strange vision should mean, ere it faded away
into sunlight.
Soon to their wondering souls there was joined the glad
spirit of Mary,
Who back from the vineyard returned when Jesus had
vanished before her.
“Come, let us seek the disciples, come, let us tell the glad
tidings.”

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Cheerfully thus to the group the Magdalene spoke,
and then added :

“Out of a garden man wandered, sin entering in by a
woman :

Back to an Eden restored let woman recover the doubting.”
Leading the way to the city, the strangers from Galilee
followed

Close on the steps of their guide, as she knocked at the
door-post of Simon—

Simon the zealot, I mean, where, sitting within in the
darkness,

The scattered disciples were found engaged with these
obstinate rumors.

Gladly their story they told, but how could the brethren
believe them ?

How could it ever be true as Thomas exclaimed mid these
doubtings :

XIV.

Now is done our work of faith,
Can it be that Christ o'er death
Triumphs with His human breath ?
Let them freely say

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

What they hope or what they fear !
Binding law both far and near
Rules supreme o'er grief and cheer,
Night is never day !

When the human body dies,
When the soul from matter flies,
When the form beloved, lies
In the silent tomb;
Who can call us back once more,
From the strange, mysterious shore,
Where the gathered souls of yore
Live beyond earth's gloom ?

Nay, my brethren, do not grieve.
I can ne'er this tale believe,
Reason can not this receive,
Can not understand !
In the Master's pierced side,
Where the spear-thrust entered wide,
In those palms once crucified,
I must thrust my hand !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

XV.

Shades of the evening grew on, while forth to a neighboring village,
Two of our company went, to seek for the absent Salome,
And as in their talk by the way they communed with each other and wondered,
A pilgrim they passed on the road, a wayfarer mantled and hooded,
Who, joining their steps toward the town, thus spoke with a tone of emotion :

XVI.

“ Wherefore this saddened gaze,
And why this gloom when all around is bright ?
Walks trouble a companion with you on life’s ways,
Silent and dark as night ? ”

Then Cleopas replied,
“ Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem,
And know’st thou not that Jesus Christ hath died ?
Would’st thou our grief condemn

“ When we had trusted all
Our hidden hopes to this, the Son of man,
The last of all the prophets ; and the pall
Grows thick o’er every plan ?

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

“ And certain women brave,
Have thrilled our spirits by the news they bring
From Joseph’s garden, for they say the grave
Contains not anything—

“ And angels guard the place.
Moreover, ’tis the third day, and we know
He whom we trusted, told us face to face,
Our faith to sight would grow.

“ And yet we see Him not,
And fears come in and rob our rising breath.
On earth there does not seem one favored spot
Untenanted by death.”

Then the wayfarer said :
“ O fools and slow of heart to take in hand
All that the prophets and seers of old
Have told you : understand

The purpose of the Lord.”
And then, with earnest look and kindling eye,
The stranger, from the visions of God’s Word,
Showed them why Christ must die !

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Then on the shady road
Which skirts the entrance to Emmaus' slope,
Reaching, by sunset's hour, their plain abode,
Aroused with kindling hope,

They pressed their guest to stay.
"Abide with us, for it is drawing late,
And shadows fall," they said, "across the way :
Pass not our humble gate."

'Twas eve ; and yet 'twas dawn !
Quick as a flash while we were breaking bread
We saw the living face we thought was dead,
And Christ was gone !

XVII.

'Twas night and the city was still. The paschal moon had
arisen,
Silvering the turrets and walls of the castles and fortresses
grim,
Light on the temple shone and the shadows were growing
tall ;
In the evening watch could be heard the clatter of horses'
hoofs,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

As down the pavement of stones some lordly Senator, late
To the feast of his Roman friends, in his lumbering chariot
was driven.

The cry of the owl so shrill, as he perched in the cedars
old,

Or the call of some vender of wares, lost in the driver's
noise,

As he hurried his mules along, broke in on the stillness of
night.

'Twas then in a secret room the eleven disciples were found,
With others to whom the reports had been brought from
the empty grave,

While wonder and doubt like the tide ruled their spirits by
turns.

Into this upper room suddenly entered the two
Who from Emmaus had come, crowning their hopes with
the words :

“Jesus is risen indeed! Simon hath seen Him alive!”

'Twas then, while with rapture we stood, scanning the
faces of friends,

To find that assurance of hope, hidden away in our breasts,
There in the midst of the group, ere we could know what
it meant,

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Jesus with glory appeared: Jesus, the same and yet changed,
Changed, yet our Jesus of old, breathing out blessings on each,
"Peace to your spirits," He said. . . . Why need I tell you the rest?
'Tis the food and the drink of the soul! Soon I shall see Him again;
Soon in His bosom recline, as once at the passover feast
To me it was given to feel the heart-beats of Him who has gone!

XVII.

Thus I've told again the story
Of the Resurrection morn,
How, from out the clouds of darkness,
Hope for man from God was born.

Hold this faith, then, do not falter,
Bear the trials of your life,
Peace comes after struggle; after
Death, comes lasting life.

THE VOICE OF ST. JOHN.

Little children, keep from idols;
Heed my faltering words to-day.
This is God, the only true One.
This is life, the only way.

God is true, and all things show it.
Let your lives your trueness prove:
Can you doubt on Easter morning,
God is light and God is love ?

THE MEANING OF THE MONUMENT.

“That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying what MEAN ye by these stones ?

Then ye shall answer them; these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever!” Joshua iv, 6-7.

I.

Still his place our soldier keeps,
Still the wife, the mother, weeps.

Still our hands the garlands bring,
Still with captive harps we sing.

To the city of the dead,
Still our willing feet are led.

Time the test of Love and Truth,
Ever guards the heart of Youth.

Tell us true, O Sentinel,
Cans't thou answer, “All is well ?”

Here midst nature's smile and frown,
Thou dost guard our favored town.



THE MEANING OF THE MONUMENT.

Towards the west thy face is turned,
Speak—the lesson thou hast learned!

Past thy pedestal the throng,
Daily move their way along,

Image of our buried dead—
Thou dost halt where they have led.

Tell us true, O Sentinel,
Is thy answer, “All is well?”

II.

Follow the dead. 'Tis better far to die
With faith and courage than to live for greed.
'Tis life, not stolen hours, which counts on high,
'Tis life to follow where God's voice doth lead.

Follow the dead. There is no joy like faith,
No cheer like action—no true hope like this,
Follow the dead. The gates of life through death,
Have opened on the fields of heavenly bliss.

Follow the dead. The motives of their life
Shall give them precedence in realms of day;
Firm with a purpose, out of earthly strife
Their souls are journeying on their heavenward way.

THE MEANING OF THE MONUMENT.

Enter the path. God's loving hand
Leads all His sons. He gives them of His power
Whene'er He calls them. Nothing can with-stand
The strength which holds them in the dying hour.

Forget thyself ! The worldling's hoarded gains
Lead to destruction. Gird thyself, be strong;
Endure, believe, strive on, these human pains
Shall issue in the Seraph's burst of song.

Only believe. Believe through doubt and fear;
Heed thy soul's instincts. Hear the voices call
Thy erring soul. Behold life's vision here
And yield to God, He will not let thee fall.

Choose your reward ! The creature's joy is thine,
If for mere gain you yield your fluttering heart ;
Choose your reward ! A joy and power divine
Are his who chooseth well the better part.

Comrades farewell ! Your work on earth is done;
Rest in the holy calm of God on high;
Ye in the path of life the palm have won,
And ye shall live since ye have dared to die !

POLLICE VERSO.

In the gladiatorial contests in the Coliseum at Rome, it was the custom for the successful combatant before killing his vanquished foe to allow him to appeal for mercy to the vast populace. If the spectators desired the vanquished to live, they showed their mercy by presenting upturned thumbs; if they desired him to be killed, they signified their wish by reversed or downward turned thumbs, as is shown in Gerome's famous picture. Hence the expression "Pollice Verso" or "Thumbs reversed" came to have the meaning of "Complete the conquest!" or "Finish the fight!"

I.

Within the Coliseum's walls,
With strained and wearied eyes,
A motley crowd from Roman halls
Shout as the vanquished dies.

Upon his couch with languid look,
The empurpled Caesar lay—
Scarce conscious as his ease he took,
Of evening's lengthening ray.

With hollow eyes and haggard mien,
The Roman matrons stood,
With gaze intent upon that scene
Of strife, and pain, and blood.

On that hard-matted, brutal floor,
The dying swordsman lay ;

POLLICE VERSO.

In vain, their mercy to implore,
His beckoning hand made way.

The noise and din—the shouts of strife,
The groans of dying men ;
Passed like the light and clouds of life
Athwart some caverned glen.

With foot upon his foeman's breast,
The lucky winner stands ;
Awaiting the supreme behest
Of countless, down-turned hands.

“ Pollice Verso ! ” is the cry,
O'er the arena heard,
The signal that the vanquished die!—
He dies—without a word !

II.

If life is strife till life be past
For souls who own a Father's hand,
How well that we should rest at last,
If life is strife.

We struggle on from morn till noon
And wonder when our feet shall stand,
In regions bright with holier life.

POLLICE VERSO.

When the last blow on self is cast,
When the last sword-thrust, whose command
Has ruled our latest will is past—
Then ends the strife.

III.

Pleasure and Profit can give no peace
They whisper in silence, "Cease, oh, cease
This long-drawn strife—Lo! the scars increase."

How'er it be, that we feel the night,
Growing dark o'er a field where once there was light,
Let us heed this motto—"Finish the fight."

Oh! ye who have struggled and won at last,
Bind now your forms to the upright mast
Like Ulysses of old, till the syrens are past.

Oh, children of yesterday—men of to-day!
There are heads which were black, that now are gray,
Lines on our faces which seem to say—

"This struggle of life—is it worth it all?
This fight for God—it is growing small;
This sense of Right—shall it go to the wall?"

But Duty, the daughter of Faith and of God,
Shows to us each that thorny road
Leading to Peace—which the Master trod!

POLLICE VERSO.

Brothers and men, let us read aright
All that this symbol speaks in light,
Let us heed the signal and "Finish the fight!"

Not pleasure alone with her empty smile,
Crafty and coy, and surcharged with guile
Can serve the nature God leads the while.

When pleasure in manhood rears his head ;
As we stand with the living and bury the dead,
Let this motto of old once more be said :

"Pollice Verso," finish the fight,
Complete the conquest—ere it be night,
Die with the armor on—Die in your might.

When the bait of reward, or the greed of gain
Leaves on the virgin soul a stain,
Listen once more to this old refrain :

"Pollice Verso"—round out thy life—
Carry the standard into the strife,
For better for worse, as with man and wife.

There is joy in service, redeeming its pain,
There is health and hope and truest gain
When the nature its highest doth attain.

IV.

We know not what that life shall be,
What regions yet unknown are there,

POLLICE VERSO.

What knowledge we shall one day see—

What glory bear !

But into life so sure, so free—

Beyond the beating of the sea,

The soul its armor-chain must wear

The symbol of our strife ; when we

Rise high above our mood's despair,

And we shall gain the victory—

In upper air.

V.

Oh ! sours of men ! my lay forgive

If pitched too high it seem—

The rest of life we each must live,

We cannot play or dream.

Our past is gone for good or ill,

Our present yet remains ;

The future lies within the will

Of him who reaps his gains.

Gone be the lower springs of life,

Gone be the cringing bow

Of mind to things, Oh, end the strife !

Complete the conquest now !

“ Pollice Verso ” be our cry !

Press down the hand till death !

Better to struggle and to die,

Than draw the craven's breath !

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

This is Francesco's tomb ; the flowers you see
Are brought each day by loving hands unknown
And placed upon this rocky sepulchre.
'T is twenty years since Old Francesco died.
It seems but yesterday. The people here
Can ne'er forget him. Every house had some
One dead, like Egypt's plague, and, whether shriven
Or dead in sins, the soul departed, dear
To father, mother, wife or husband's heart,
Was covered by the breath of holy prayer.
" 'T is all poor man can do," Francesco said ;
" Come, let us follow dying ones with prayer."

How do we know
But the mercy of Heaven
Reaches to souls
Whom we call unforgiven ?
Who can forbid us
To follow our dead
With a prayer to our Father
That the lost may be led ?
Who shall forbid us
Humanity's part ?

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

Who shall restrain
The bold leap of the heart,
As we pray for our loved ones,
Ask the Father to keep,
In His mercy, the feet
Of His lost, wand'ring sheep ?

Such was his daily prayer. Amid yon grove
That skirts the vine-dressed hill, the Cluny monks
Oft gathered, as the sun went down ; and there
Brother Francesco prayed, with hope inspired,
For all the dead. Great faith in prayer had he !
But I must tell you why we keep the day
For All Souls. This Francesco, man of God,
Went as a pilgrim to the Holy Land.
The tomb of Christ he visited, and paid
To the Most High his vows. Returning thence,
He fain betook him to Mount Etna's side ;
For in a cavern, it was said, what time
The mountain thundered and poured out its fire,
The cursings and the cries of all the damned
'T was possible for men of faith to hear,—
God's recompense for all their trust in Him.
Here, at the mouth of Hell, Francesco paused,
Impatient for the slumbering fires to give
The sign when spirits doomed might groan their hate
And rage against the sovereign laws of God.

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

For in the belching flames and throes which shook
The sturdy island's base and mountain's side,
The cries of all the damned were lost in wild
Confusion. Here Francesco waited. Oft
In the hot noon, or when the moonbeams shed
Their peaceful influence on that rocky mount,
The holy brother, mid the jeers and cries
Of peasants smeared with grape-juice, at their toil
Amid the vines, the sport of children and
Of all the wagging crowd, yet undisturbed
Pursued his purpose, faltering not. Him in
The cleft, at midnight prayer, the whirlwind found,
The lava spoke in myriad hissing tongues,
The mountain trembled, and the flames shot forth
Like curling vipers on the stony crest
Of fiery Etna. Sheltered, unappalled,
Francesco, in the stormy war of all
The elements, heard whisperings—*Devils lost,*
Cursing the Cluny monks. Their prayers, they said,
Snatched many a soul from Fate and lowest Hell.
E'en God Himself, they muttered, yielded to
Such rescuing faith. Then listening undismayed,
The father heard them chant this impious song,
In their wild wrath :

Curse these men of Faith !

Faith does more than gold.

THE LEGEND OF ALL-SOULS-DAY.

Curse their holy breath,
 Winning souls untold !

Thunder in the air
 Clears the murky sky.
Breath of living prayer
 Brings the Father nigh !

When the world was ours,
 When the world was dead,
Faith awoke new powers,
 Faith new light has shed !

Curse these men of Faith !
 Prayer is not in vain !
Men of Faith can dare
 Save lost worlds again !

Curse these men of Faith !
 Faith does more than gold,
Conquers Hell and Death,
 Never waxes cold !

—More there is not to tell ;
Methinks the rest is known to all the world.
Odilo, Abbot of this place, has kept
The day forever sacred when the monk
Within the cavern heard the devils rave,
And called it then “ *The Feast of all the Souls.* ”
Then the Pope blessed the day. The rest you know.

RE-ASSURANCE.

“ And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

1 John. v. 4.

Is there a victory then
Over our doubts and fears,
Is there a passage for men
Out of this valley of tears ?
For men who are weary and worn,
Broken, desponding and sad,
Is there Christ's smile for earth's scorn,
Making the sorrowful glad ?

Is there a joy for our trust,
A hope and assurance of peace,
Is there a time when our doubts
And temptations forever shall cease ?
Is there a morning of light,
A Sabbath of quiet and rest,
When the end of the journey is reached,
And the crown of rejoicing possessed ?

Yes ! For at last we shall find
The Way, and the Truth, and the Life,
In our Lord, as the end of our search,
In Christ, as the goal of the strife.

RE-ASSURANCE.

Doubt, and temptation, and sin,
And the struggles we wage while we roam
Will be hushed, in the past, and life's din
Be forgotten when resting at home.

So there's a victory then
Over our doubts and our fears ;
Faith shall forever give way
To knowledge which cometh with years !
A knowledge of hope changed to sight,
Of trust to fruition made plain ;
A life where the will and the power
To love as Christ loveth shall reign.

THE MIRAGE.

“IT DOTHT NOT YET APPEAR WHAT WE SHALL BE.”

“Splendor! Immensity! Rapture! Grand words, great things: a little definite happiness would be more to the purpose.”—MADAME DE GASPARIK.

In the mood of suspense I ask, can it be true,
All this faith which we cling to and trust in
With courage and joy? Shall I tremblingly rue
In the future unknown, this strong certainty
Steadying my hopes here on earth? For I am so small,
In the sweep of God's planets; so tired and lone,
In the rush of the torrents of souls! Amid all
That I know not, nor care for, nor trust in, shall I,
Still myself as I am, press in at the door
That moves open at death and admits me to
Splendor, immensity, rapture,—and more
Than my mind can conceive of? But shall this
Be I, this new, wonderful creature? Methinks I had rather
Be less of the marvel, effulgent in rainbows of bliss,
And more of the man, who in heaven could gather
His human ones round him and live without sin, as he was!
For how can I love these great powers and angels,
And all the unknown ones who surge out and in

THE MIRAGE.

From the worlds that I never have dreamed of ?
O God, is it thus ? Shall I lose myself there
In the soul-dust of lives which are numberless, depths
Which I never can enter ? My Father, Oh ! where
Shall I rest myself, wearied and staggered
With all this sublimity ? O God, is there not by
Thy throne, in which center the lines of
Creation's far-reaching expanse, the form and the eye
Of the human one, tingeing eternity's colorless blank
With the blood-drops of time, and making in space
Unsubstantial and airy with cloud-fleece, a firm
And unchanging reality, where I can place
My poor wandering feet close by His feet ! Yea, my God,
I shall see Thee through Christ ! I shall cling to that Hand
Which was pierced for my sins, and though awed
By the shining of infinite light, still my soul
Shall be knit to the human in Jesus ! I shall stand
Where the sinning men saved stand : the roll
Of the worlds ever moving around me : the flight
Of the thronging attendants of spirits, the life of
Eternity dreaded, unknown, shall awake to my sight,
As the feverish dreams turn to joy when the sufferer wakes
to the light.

AMONG THE HILLS.

“Come to me, oh my child,” my mother saith,
As resting in the spear-grass of the bluff,
I seek new comfortings, and with her breath
Fanning my cheek, feel this is joy enough.

“Come to me from the toil, the care, the strife;
Come from the false faith to the ever true;
Look not behind thee at thy empty life,—
Come seek thy mother’s blessing ever new.

“Wherefore this haste and toil, this carking care,
Why all this restless hurry, fret and pain?
The grave awaits thy quickened speed, and where,
So well as here, canst thou thy soul regain?”

“Forget my child, the standards of the hour;
Forget the paltry hoard and gains of men;
Lay down the rod of fickle Fashion’s power,
Come to thy mother’s arms, my child, again!”

“Yes, mother, dear, thy truant turns to thee,
To thee comes back the prodigal of yore;
Fooled, snared and blinded I thy face would see—
Would be the mother’s innocent once more.

“Calm me, O! Spirit of the Meadow’s God!
Breathe through my soul the peace that comes to thee,
Fold me within thine arms, and let the sod,
The sky, the mountains, give their calm to me.”

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

“ I have a message from God unto thee.” Judges iv, 20.

God has a word for thee,
My child, whose grasp on God is strong and sure,
Keep thou thy childhood spotless, fresh and pure !
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My boy, just entering on the joys of youth,
Be not deceived—there is no guide like Truth !
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My brother man, in the hot field of strife,
Lay hold, not on existence but on life !
This is God’s word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
My sister, queen o’er many a fluttering heart,
Gifts perish, graces wither—choose that part
That shall not fall from thee.

God has a word for thee,
My father, standing at the gates of Death,
Be not afraid—Heaven’s own immortal breath
Is waiting there for thee.

THE MESSAGE OF THE PULPIT.

God has a word for thee,
Oh! happy soul, exultant as the lark.
Rejoice! Rejoice! but midst thy pleasures—Hark!
When God would speak to thee.

God has a word for thee,
O mourning soul, torn by thy sorrow sore,
A day will come when thou shalt mourn no more,
This is God's word for thee.

God has a word for thee,
Thou fallen world, on God's own pivots hung,
Thou fallen world, out on God's confines flung,
This is God's word for thee—

God speaketh to His world,
God dwells with man, in man's own fallen home;
God wills it that we shall no longer roam
Out from His presence hurled.

This is God's word to man.
The Son of God is here, Oh! be not dumb,
The Spirit and the Bride are calling, "Come!"
God dwelleth now with man.



THE IDLE HARP.

“ As for our harps we hanged them upon the willows.”

I have no time for Thee,
Harp of my bright and lithesome boyhood's ways,
Care, work and duty now consume my days,
I have no time for Thee !

I have no need of Thee :
A captive in the chains of daily toil —
Song comes not as the fruit of hard-reaped soil —
I have no need of Thee !

I have no soul for Thee :
Hang thou upon the willow's bending arm ;
A silent harp can do the world no harm,
I have no soul for Thee !

I have no skill for Thee :
The captive bird can never raise the songs
Of joy which to his freedom's hour belongs,
I have no skill for Thee !

I have no place for Thee :
The minstrel's note sounds harsh o'er fields of strife :

THE IDLE HARP.

'T is work and toil, not song, which makes our life :
I have no place for Thee !

But I may come to Thee,
Thou Idle Harp, neglected and unstrung ;
Thou Idle Harp, upon the willows hung,
Perchance I'll come to Thee,

And Thou shalt speak again,
Thy notes forgotten, and thy chords once more
Shall soothe my spirit as in days of yore,
Yes, Thou shalt speak again !

Rest till the coming morn !
As spoke great Memnon's statue when the breath
Awoke its strains, so from thy seeming death
New voices shall be born !



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